Craving Change

Posted originally on the Archive of Our Own at http://archiveofourown.org/works/52433665.

Rating:	Teen And Up Audiences
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Categories:	Gen, M/M
Fandom:	Hannibal (TV)
Relationships:	Will Graham/Hannibal Lecter, Molly Graham/Will Graham (mentioned)
Characters:	Will Graham, Hannibal Lecter, Molly Graham (mentioned)
Additional Tags:	Episode: s03e11 ...And the Beast from the Sea, Conversations, Introspection, Jealousy, Unresolved Emotional Tension
Language:	English
Series:	Part 13 of Hannibal Bingo 2022/2023, Part 5 of Introspection
Stats:	Published: 2023-12-23 Words: 1,204 Chapters: 1/1

Craving Change

by hartfeathers

Summary

Will storms through the BSHCI with a steadfast single mindedness, paying little attention to Alana or the other staff members as he makes his way through the eerie and familiar hallways. Frustration and anger and other emotions he dare not give name to writhe beneath his skin like snakes as he walks towards Hannibal's room. The guards push the doors open for him and, as if Hannibal had sensed his approach, the older man matches his step stride for stride until they are face-to-face with only the thick pane of glass and a scant few inches of air separating them.

“I'm just about worn out with you crazy sons of bitches."

~~~~

Prompt - 311 And the Beast From the Sea

Notes

This is just a really short fic brooding on the last scene in 311.

I wasn't sure how to fill this prompt but then had the idea to use my analysis post as inspiration.
It's not overly detailed because it's one of the shorter and slightly less complex scenes between them but I hope you enjoy this anyway.

See the end of the work for more notes
~~~~

Will storms through the BSHCI with a steadfast single mindedness, paying little attention to Alana or the other staff members as he makes his way through the eerie and familiar hallways. Frustration and anger and other emotions he dare not give name to writhe beneath his skin like snakes as he walks towards Hannibal's room. The guards push the doors open for him and, as if Hannibal had sensed his approach, the older man matches his step stride for stride until they are face-to-face with only the thick pane of glass and a scant few inches of air separating them.

“I'm just about worn out with you crazy sons of bitches.”

“The essence of the worst in the human spirit is not found in the crazy sons of bitches. Ugliness is found in the faces of the crowd.” Hannibal replies simply, betraying nothing but a quiet sense of calm.

“What did you say to him?” Will demands, his voice raspy and almost hushed. He is trying to maintain control over his emotions, trying to conceal his fear and concern for his wife and the burning anger that has been simmering since he got the call about the attack. He knows Hannibal wants a reaction from him, to pry open those vulnerable gaps in his armour so he can slither inside. Will is desperately trying to keep him at bay, to maintain distance between them despite knowing, deep down, that he was lost to Hannibal's thrall the moment he laid eyes on him again after those three long years of separation.

“Save yourself, kill them all. Then I gave him your home address.” Hannibal states, no regret nor sympathy grace his words or expression, and why would it? He feels no guilt for his actions, in fact he can only feel a little disappointed the Dragon wasn't more successful. But even in his failure he has managed to accomplish Hannibal's main goal, to refocus Will's attention on him. “How's the wife?” Hannibal asks, refusing to refer to her as *your wife*, to acknowledge her connection to Will as a spouse. It chafes against old wounds and aggravates his jealousy to have to confront the fact Will has tried to move on from him. Hannibal doesn't resist his impulse to dig the knife in, to use his words as weapons to try to encourage a detachment between Will and Molly, even if it betrays his jealousy.

Will can't help but take a fraction of a step forward in response to the taunt while still trying to repress the anger bubbling inside him, he swallows it down. “How's my wife?” He growls in a low voice, putting emphasis on *my* in rebuttal to Hannibal's deliberate lack of possessive terms. “She's lucky.”

“She survived the Great Red Dragon. Takes a pinch more than luck.” Hannibal can't help the small, begrudging sliver of respect he feels for Molly Graham, to survive the Dragon is no easy feat. Despite his personal feelings of resentment towards her, he acknowledges her strength and intelligence. “When you look at her now, what do you see?” he asks, softly coaxing.

Will breaks eye contact for a moment, for the first time since stepping into the room, as all those horrifying, beautiful images flicker like a home movie in his mind. “You know what I see.” Will answers, his words barely a whisper as if spilling a secret that ought not to be told.

“Before he became the Red Dragon, this shy boy would never have dared any of this.” Hannibal thinks back to the shy boy he first met in Jack Crawford’s office; his defensiveness and the way he circled Hannibal at a cautious distance at first, like a wild dog. He wonders what that shy boy would think now, if he ever believed himself capable of the things Will has done in the years since. He wonders what that man would think of the blood and horror that now stains his skin.

“Now he thinks he can do anything. Anything.” The Dragon has been brazen enough to attempt the murder of Will's family, the family of the man investigating him. That level of confidence is terrifyingly dangerous. “Anything.” Will feels his emotions slipping, his anger and distaste seeping through the cracks in his mask.

“The Dragon likely thinks you are as much a monster as you think he is.”

Will frowns and searches Hannibal's gaze ravenously. “Is this a competition?” Will spits. Unbidden, he remembers Randall Tier and old resentment flares hot in his chest, snared with barbs of jealousy that catch and twist painfully. Insecurities raise their head and it's like he's back in Hannibal's office, reduced to feelings of inadequacy and unimportance. Stewing in resentment and jealousy over Hannibal's other patients, the other people he has helped become. It feels like he's repeating their dance.

"’Two souls, alas, are dwelling in my breast, and one is striving to forsake its brother.’” For a split second they gaze at each other, a shared moment of connection that is as fragile as glass. “The Great Red Dragon is freedom to him, shedding his skin, the sound of his voice, his own reflection.” Will remembers looking at his own shattered reflection, pieces of himself fractured and missing, and wonders what it would feel like to shed his skin, what that freedom would taste like. “The building of a new body and the othering of himself, the splitting of his personality, all seem active and deliberate. He craves change.”

“He didn't murder those families? He ‘changed’ them?” Will queries aloud with a soft almost disbelieving laugh as he finally understands the last piece of the puzzle. He realises in this moment that all of the Dragon's actions have been in an effort to trigger and aid a transformation. The Dragon is in the midst of his becoming, the blood and breath of those families feeding and fuelling him, making him stronger.

“Don't you crave change, Will?”

Will can only stare at Hannibal as those words stretch in the space between them, taunting and tempting all at once. The following silence is heavy with unspoken meaning because Will can't deny it. He cannot refute that part of him craves change, craves transformation, craves his becoming. Despite loving his wife and their life together it was only ever an ill-fitting suit, pulling tight at the shoulders as he tried to make it fit. His life with them is everything he wanted before he met Hannibal, love and comfort and normality. But in the aftermath of knowing Hannibal, of being shaped by his hands, there is no normal for Will anymore, no matter how hard he might try to strive for it, part of him will always know he is different. Part of him will always crave more, will always crave Hannibal. And now that part is becoming bigger and louder than it has been in years. Being in Hannibal's presence once more has fed that repressed desire and it now hungrily aches for more and Will knows he is

fast approaching the point of no return. The only thing left to decide is whether to return to his facade of a life or to shed his skin.

End Notes

This is my analysis post the fic is based on - https://twitter.com/hartfeathers/status/1405292167497543680?t=P0Kj2V6lGhgy8MfT111gzQ&s=19

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!